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**COMPARABILITY OF CONSUMER GOODS
IN THE USSR AND IN THE US**

1958

*To be
revised*



CIA/RR RA 59-18

December 1959

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS**

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Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79S01046A000700090001-5

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this research aid is to present certain technical information which has not been readily available but which is basic to the evaluation of production of consumer goods in the USSR. Such technical information chiefly concerns weights and measures and various factors bearing on the quality of products. By ascertaining these factors, definition of products is in part established, and comparisons between Soviet and US products are made possible.

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Summary	1
1. Introduction	2
2. Cotton Fabric	3
a. General	3
b. Definition	4
c. Statistical Comparison	4
d. Inputs of Raw Materials	5
e. Significant Comparative Differences	6
3. Wool Fabric	6
a. General	6
b. Definition	6
c. Statistical Comparison	7
d. Inputs of Raw Materials	8
e. Significant Comparative Differences	8
4. Fabric of Manmade Fiber and Natural Silk	8
a. General	8
b. Definition	9
c. Statistical Comparison	9
d. Inputs of Raw Materials	10
e. Significant Comparative Differences	10
5. Linen Fabric	11
a. General	11
b. Statistical Comparison	11
c. Inputs of Raw Materials	12
6. Leather Footwear	12
a. General	12
b. Definition	12
c. Statistical Comparison	12
d. Inputs of Raw Materials	12
e. Significant Comparative Differences	13

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	<u>Page</u>
7. Paper and Paperboard	14
a. General	14
b. Definition	14
c. Statistical Comparison	14
d. Inputs of Raw Materials	14
e. Significant Comparative Differences	16
8. Durable Consumer Goods	16
a. General	16
b. Statistical Comparison	16

Appendixes

Appendix A. Methodology	19
Appendix B. Source References	21

Tables

1. Percentage Distribution of Production of Cotton Fabric in the USSR and in the US, by Type of Fabric, 1958	4
2. Cotton Fabric in the USSR and in the US, 1958 . .	5
3. Wool Fabric in the USSR and in the US, 1958 . . .	7
4. Production of Fabric of Manmade Fiber and Natural Silk in the USSR and in the US, by Type of Fabric, 1958	9
5. Fabric of Manmade Fiber and Natural Silk in the USSR and in the US, 1958	10
6. Linen Fabric in the USSR and in the US, 1958 . .	11
7. Footwear in the USSR and in the US, 1958	13

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Page

8. Paper and Paperboard in the USSR and in the US, 1958	15
9. Woodpulp in the USSR and in the US, 1958	15
10. Selected Durable Consumer Goods in the USSR and in the US, 1958	17

Chart

Following Page

Production of Selected Consumer Goods in the USSR and in the US, 1958	2
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COMPARABILITY OF CONSUMER GOODS IN THE USSR AND IN THE US*
1958

Summary

The US is far ahead of the USSR in quantity and in technology of production of consumer goods.** US production of cotton fabric is about double that of the USSR, and US production of paper is almost six times that of the USSR. The level of technological efficiency of light industry*** in the US also is far above the Soviet level. The Soviet paper industry is technologically underdeveloped, although the USSR possesses ample raw materials for production of paper. Soviet radio and television receivers compare a little more favorably with those produced in the US both in quantity and in technology of production, but other Soviet household appliances, particularly washing machines and refrigerators, compare far less favorably both in the quantities produced and in the general features of quality and engineering.

Soviet fabrics generally are narrower and lighter in weight than US fabrics. Product mixes vary widely in the two countries, especially in production of cotton fabric, for which a large percentage of Soviet production consists of inexpensive fabrics such as low-quality twill and low-quality clothing fabrics. Even though much of the fabric produced is of low quality and even though production of cotton fabric is emphasized in the USSR, its production in square meters per capita still is only about 40 percent as large as US production. For production per capita of selected consumer goods, see the chart.****

In 1958, for the first time, the USSR surpassed the US in the total production of wool fabric in square meters, although not in production per capita. In the consumption of wool fabric per capita, the US still is far ahead. In fact, US production of wool fabric has declined since 1947 as a result of the development and production of new fabrics of synthetic fiber, such as nylon, Orlon, and Dacron. A change in US

* The estimates and conclusions in this research aid represent the best judgment of this Office as of 15 November 1959.

** The term consumer goods as used in this research aid comprises textiles, clothing, footwear, paper and related products, and durable consumer goods.

*** The term light industry as used in this research aid comprises production of textiles, clothing, and footwear.

**** Following p. 2.

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statistical reporting in 1950 effected a further decline in the official totals for production of wool fabric.* Soviet production per capita of fabric of manmade fibers** and natural silk is only about one-third as large as US production. The USSR produces linen fabric in small quantities, whereas the US never has been a producer of linen fabric.

Production of leather footwear in the USSR remains low in quantity and inferior in quality. Production per capita in the USSR is about one-half that in the US, raw materials are often of poor quality, and most details of construction would not be acceptable by US standards.

Soviet consumption of paper and paperboard is about one-tenth that of the US. The USSR is particularly lacking in wrapping and packaging paper, in paperboard, and in tissues and household papers, which together make up at least two-thirds of US consumption of paper and paperboard.

In addition to vast differences in the numbers of durable consumer goods produced in the USSR and in the US, there is a great disparity in the design, size, and engineering features of such major appliances as refrigerators and washing machines. Furthermore, many appliances important to the US household, such as food freezers and room air conditioners, are not produced in the USSR in household models.

1. Introduction

The announcement of the Soviet Seven Year Plan (1959-65), which was approved in February 1959, has resulted in increased interest in comparisons between the consumer goods available in the USSR and those available in the US. A subsequent boast by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Nikita Khrushchev, that the USSR was destined to achieve the highest standard of living in the world, has accentuated the need for and interest in such comparisons. This research aid, therefore, is directed toward making appropriate statistical comparisons, explaining statistical definitions, and examining qualitative differences in consumer goods produced in the two countries. These comparisons are confined to textiles, leather footwear, paper and paperboard, and certain other consumer goods.

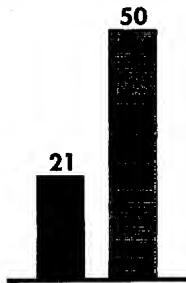
* Beginning in 1951, US statistics on wool fabric counted only fabric that was at least 50-percent wool. Earlier statistics had counted fabric that was at least 25-percent wool.

** Including artificial fiber (rayon) and synthetic fiber.

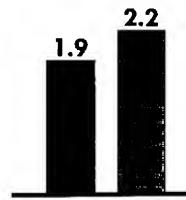
PRODUCTION OF SELECTED CONSUMER GOODS IN THE USSR AND IN THE US, 1958

Per Capita

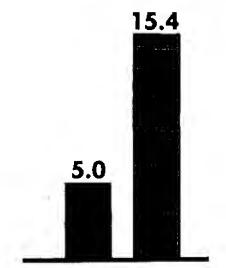
Cotton Fabric
Square meters per capita



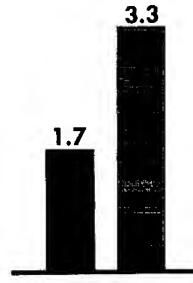
Wool Fabric
Square meters per capita



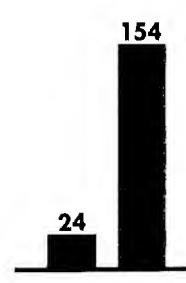
Cloth of Manmade
Fiber and Natural Silk
Square meters per capita



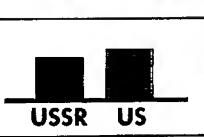
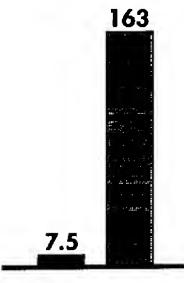
Leather Footwear
Pairs per capita



Paper
Pounds per capita

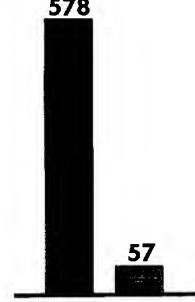


Paperboard
Pounds per capita

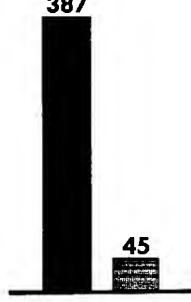


Number of Persons per Unit of Production

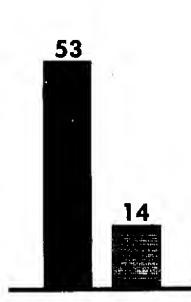
Refrigerators
Persons per unit



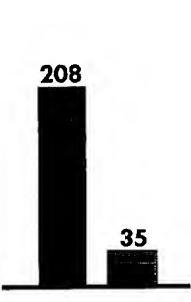
Washing Machines
Persons per unit



Radios
Persons per unit



Television
Persons per unit



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Statistical comparisons of production of fabric can be made in a number of ways -- by linear measure, weight, width, or composition of fibers or yarns. Such measurements have been made for this research aid. Another comparison, equally important but difficult to make, is that of qualities resulting from the technical efficiency of the various processes -- spinning, weaving, dyeing, and finishing. These qualities must be judged by inspection of the finished product and therefore can be given practically no consideration in this research aid. The appearance of Soviet clothing, however, as reported by travelers to the USSR, testifies to the low technological efficiency of the textile industry.

Many of the durable consumer goods, including household appliances and other items of home and personal equipment, produced in the USSR and the US can hardly be compared by any measure. Moreover, many durable consumer goods already owned by households in the US are lacking in the average household in the USSR. In respect to certain other durable consumer goods -- for example, clocks and watches, cameras, and small electrical appliances -- statistical reporting is inadequate for comparison, or data are completely lacking in one country or the other. For these various reasons, the category of durable consumer goods is treated only briefly in this research aid.

Data in this research aid are for the year 1958 unless otherwise indicated.*

2. Cotton Fabric

a. General

Cotton fabric, the basic textile in the US as in the USSR, still is a preferred clothing fabric, is an essential household fabric, and has numerous roles in industry. Since 1950, production of cotton fabric in the US has remained fairly steady, having reached a level sufficient to meet consumer demand. Research and development in the US during this period thus have been directed toward making special improvements in the character of fabrics, such as increasing wrinkle resistance, developing the "drip-dry" finish, and creating interesting new textures in yarns and weaves. Soviet interest, meanwhile, has centered largely on boosting the total production of cotton fabric, which still is not sufficient to supply consumer needs. Therefore, improvements in quality and the development of improved surface characteristics are refinements which have received little notice. At this point the Soviet goal of catching up with the West appears to relate solely to the quantity of production.

* For a list of source references categorized according to types of information, see Appendix B.

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b. Definition

Statistical reporting in the US includes cotton woven goods measuring more than 12 inches in width, and the USSR probably uses similar reporting procedures. In the US, fabric of blended fibers, primarily cotton, is reported as cotton fabric. Artificial fiber is blended with cotton in the USSR, although this practice is not extensive, and synthetic fiber is not yet used for this purpose. Cotton fabric in the USSR includes a range of clothing and household fabrics similar to that of the US. (Fabric of tire cord is excluded in the US but may be counted in the USSR.) The relative emphasis given to production of various types of cotton fabric in the two countries varies widely, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Percentage Distribution of Production of Cotton Fabric
in the USSR and in the US, by Type of Fabric
1958

Type of Fabric	USSR	US	Percent
Print and clothing fabric	40	28	
Sheeting	14	26	
Toweling	2	6	
Fine cotton goods	a/	14	
Cotton twill (utility fabric)	10	a/	
Gauze, cheesecloth, and related types	11	12	
Industrial and technical fabrics	9	5	
Other (including decorator fabrics, napped fabrics, gray goods, and cotton duck)	14	9	
Total	100	100	

a. No category. Small quantities probably were counted in with print and clothing fabric.

c. Statistical Comparison

In comparing production of cotton fabric in the USSR with that in the US, various means of measurement deserve consideration. The more important of these means of measuring such production are shown

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in Table 2, which gives data concerning the supply and consumption of cotton fabric in the USSR and in the US in 1958.

Table 2

Cotton Fabric in the USSR and in the US
1958

Means of Measurement	Unit	USSR	US
Quantity			
Total production	Million square meters	4,408	8,781
	Million linear meters a/	5,800	8,207
Production per capita	Square meters	21	50
	Linear meters	28	47
Consumption per capita	Square meters	21	48
	Linear meters	27	45
Imports	Million linear meters	24	128
Exports	Million linear meters	166	450
Characteristic			
Width	Linear meters b/	0.76	1.07
Weight	Grams per square meter c/	127	150
	Grams per linear meter c/	97	160

a. Soviet width equals 0.76 meter and US width 1.07 meters.

b. The figure for width is used to convert from linear to square meters.

c. Weight cannot always be considered an accurate measure of quality; fine broadcloth may weigh less than coarse broadcloth. When considered in relation to all types of cotton fabric, however, the greater weight may be considered an indication of better quality.

d. Inputs of Raw Materials

In the USSR, cotton fabric is produced largely from domestically grown cotton but also from cotton produced in Egypt and other Asian countries. Very little blending with other fibers has been practiced so far, but artificial and synthetic fiber are to be added to cotton fabric by 1965. US cotton fabric is produced largely from domestically grown cotton, but blending with artificial and synthetic fiber is more prevalent than in the USSR.

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e. Significant Comparative Differences

Cotton fabric is wider and heavier in the US than in the USSR. Since 1939, US cotton fabric has increased in width by 9 percent, the largest proportionate change being in the fine fabrics. This change, in turn, is reflected in an increase in the average weight per meter of cotton fabric and thus in a decline in the number of meters per kilogram of fabric. Data available since 1954 indicate that the average weight and width of Soviet cotton fabric have tended to remain constant.

Smaller quantities of sheeting and toweling are produced in the USSR than in the US. Finely woven fabric of high thread count also is more rare in the USSR, whereas a coarser utility twill is produced in greater quantities.

3. Wool Fabric

a. General

Soviet production of wool fabric, although rivaling that of the US in quantity, still is not sufficient for consumer needs. In 1958 the USSR exceeded the US for the first time in production of wool fabric in terms of square meters.* US production of wool fabric, in fact, has been declining since 1947. Contributing to this decline in the reported US totals was the change in statistical procedure effected in 1950. Thus wool fabric now includes only fabric that is at least 50-percent wool, whereas in earlier years cloth that was only at least 25-percent wool was included. A further reduction has occurred because of the abundance of woollike fabric of synthetic fiber which has found increasing favor with consumers. Fabrics of synthetic fiber, a sizable part of which may be considered substitutes for wool, have increased from 50 million linear meters in 1947 to 700 million linear meters in 1958, 14 times production in 1947. At present, however, the USSR has no synthetic fiber to be used in substantial quantities as substitutes for wool in production of fabric.

b. Definition

In the USSR, fabric containing as little as 30-percent wool is reported as wool fabric. The most common blending practice appears to utilize about 50-percent wool, with pure wool fabric making up less than 10 percent of the total production. Of the total production of wool

* In 1957 the USSR exceeded the US in terms of linear meters. Measurement in linear meters, however, is less accurate and in this instance misleading.

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fabric, worsteds comprise about 40 percent, wool fabric for apparel 40 percent, and coarse and reclaimed wool fabrics about 20 percent. Fabrics not used for apparel, if included, are not designated as such.

US statistics for wool fabric include only fabrics that are at least 50-percent wool. Of the total production, 30 to 40 percent is worsted, about 55 to 65 percent is wool fabric for apparel, and about 5 percent is fabric for other purposes.

In Soviet production of wool fabric, blending is employed in order to extend production, whereas blending in the US is directed more often toward achieving a desired effect in the type or quality of fabric. Blending in substitute fiber of up to 33 percent of the total composition generally does not change properties of wool, but large-scale changes occur when the fabric consists of more than 50 percent of a substitute fiber.

c. Statistical Comparison

Data concerning the supply and consumption of wool fabric in the USSR and in the US in 1958 are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Wool Fabric in the USSR and in the US
1958

Means of Measurement	Unit	USSR	US
Quantity			
Total production	Million square meters	385	383
	Million linear meters a/	303	247
Production per capita	Square meters	1.9	2.2
	Linear meters	1.5	1.4
Consumption per capita	Square meters	1.9	2.5
	Linear meters	1.5	1.6
Imports	Million linear meters	14	34
Exports	Million linear meters	Negligible	Negligible
Characteristic			
Width	Linear meters	1.27	1.55
Weight	Grams per square meter	350	275
	Grams per linear meter	444	426

a. Soviet width equals 1.27 meters and US width 1.55 meters.

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d. Inputs of Raw Materials

Soviet inputs of raw materials include large quantities of substitute fiber in addition to much coarse wool and small quantities of fine wool and reclaimed wool. In the US, in recent years, increasing quantities of high-quality synthetic fiber have been blended with wool to develop new and desirable types of wool fabric. Cotton and artificial fiber also are used as blending fibers in the US, as are small quantities of reclaimed wool.

e. Significant Comparative Differences

US wool fabric is wider than Soviet wool fabric, but Soviet wool fabric is heavier. The heavier weight of wool fabric in the USSR is explained by the following facts: (1) the fleece weight of coarse wool is greater than that of fine wool; (2) the substitute or blending fibers used in the USSR tend to weigh more than those used in the US*; and (3) the colder climate in the USSR requires maximum warmth, which can be achieved only by means of heavier fabrics. Lack of the materials needed to provide enough all-wool fabric necessitates extensive blending with other materials.

4. Fabric of Manmade Fiber** and Natural Silk

a. General

Fabric of manmade fiber is especially adaptable to production of silklike clothing and household items which have found increasingly popular acceptance in the US since the early 1900's. A similar development is underway in the USSR, where fabric of artificial fiber has become relatively commonplace but where fabric of synthetic fiber has come into production only recently.

Although manmade fiber was used originally as a substitute for silk, more recent developments have concerned the creation of substitutes for wool from synthetic fiber. Because of the increasing popularity of the new and varied types of fabric of synthetic fiber, the US has experienced a decline in production of artificial fiber since World War II. Production of artificial fiber in 1957 was only 60 percent of that in 1950, the highest postwar year. The USSR, for its part, is in a much earlier stage of development, producing very small quantities of fabric of synthetic fiber and striving for rapid increases in production of cloth of artificial fiber.

* For example, cotton is generally heavier than synthetic fibers.

** Including artificial fiber (rayon) and synthetic fiber, such as nylon, Orlon, and Dacron.

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b. Definition

In the USSR the term silk is used to represent a composite of fabrics woven of manmade fiber and natural silk. These fabrics are predominantly silklike in appearance, contrasted with the woollike character of some US fabrics of synthetic fiber. In the US, terminology and statistical counting are more explicit: fabric is identified by type, and the amount of production of each type is reported. To establish a comparison between the two countries, estimates of Soviet production, by type of fabric, were derived from officially reported aggregates, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Production of Fabric of Manmade Fiber and Natural Silk
in the USSR and in the US, by Type of Fabric
1958

Type of Fabric	USSR a/	Million Linear Meters US
Artificial fiber	685	1,496
Synthetic fiber		
Nylon and predominantly nylon mixtures	76	271
Other	Negligible	367 b/
Natural silk	84	23
Total	845	2,157

a. Estimates based on relative quantities of fiber produced. Of the total manmade fiber, about 90 percent is artificial fiber and 10 percent nylon and other synthetic fiber. About 10 percent of the silk fabric is natural silk.

b. Including largely acrylic, vinyl, and polyester fibers.

c. Statistical Comparison

Data concerning the supply and consumption of fabric of manmade fiber and natural silk in the USSR and in the US in 1958 are shown in Table 5.*

* Table 5 follows on p. 10.

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Table 5

Fabric of Manmade Fiber and Natural Silk
 in the USSR and in the US
 1958

<u>Means of Measurement</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>US</u>
Quantity			
Total production	Million square meters	1,039	2,675
Production per capita	Million linear meters a/	845	2,157
Consumption per capita	Square meters	5.0	15.4
	Linear meters	4.1	12.4
Imports	Square meters	5.3	14.5
Exports	Linear meters	4.3	11.7
	Million linear meters	51	Negligible
	Million linear meters	8	123
Characteristic			
Width	Linear meters	1.23	1.24
Weight	Grams per square meter	114	126
	Grams per linear meter	140	156

a. Soviet width equals 1.23 meters and US width 1.24 meters.

d. Inputs of Raw Materials

In the USSR, artificial fiber is the predominant fiber in the category of fabrics which includes manmade fiber and natural silk. Almost one-third of the artificial fiber is imported. Only about 10 percent of the category consists of natural silk, and an even smaller percentage represents synthetic fiber. In the US, 30 percent of the category is synthetic fiber, and the rest includes artificial fiber and a small percentage of natural silk.

e. Significant Comparative Differences

The average width of fabric of artificial fiber is about the same in the USSR and in the US, but substantial differences occur when types of fabric are compared on other bases. The US produces a wide variety of fabrics of manmade fiber and natural silk which varies in texture and weave and which is designed for a wide range of household,

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clothing, and industrial uses. Soviet production is restricted to fewer basic types.

5. Linen Fabric

a. General

The USSR, a producer of linen fabric for centuries, continues annually to achieve small increases in production. The US, however, does not produce linen fabric and uses only very small quantities of linen fiber in its textile industry.

Linen fabric in the USSR is used extensively for industrial purposes, about 70 percent of production having been devoted to such purposes in 1955. Of the industrial linen produced, more than one-half was used as packaging material for industrial products. Linen fabric available for consumer uses is divided between clothing and household fabrics.

b. Statistical Comparison

Data concerning the supply and consumption of linen fabric in the USSR and in the US in 1958 are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Linen Fabric in the USSR and in the US
1958

Means of Measurement	Unit	USSR	US
Quantity			
Total production	Million square meters	529	0
	Million linear meters a/	481	0
Production per capita	Square meters	2.5	0
	Linear meters	2.3	0
Consumption per capita	Square meters	2.6	0
	Linear meters	2.4	N.A.
Imports	Million linear meters	15	3
Exports	Million linear meters	Negligible	0
Characteristic			
Width	Linear meters	1.10	0
Weight	Grams per square meter	210	0
	Grams per linear meter	231	0

a. Soviet width equals 1.10 meters.

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c. Inputs of Raw Materials

Flax for production of linen fabric is produced in the USSR.

6. Leather Footwear

a. General

Although the USSR has long been noted for its production of leather products, Soviet production of footwear is inadequate both in quantity and in quality to meet the needs of the population. The lack of durability and the poor selection of models are the most common criticisms heard from the consumer. Most of the Soviet plants producing footwear are poorly equipped, and hand labor continues to be extensive.

US factories, already producing footwear in relative abundance, direct their efforts toward further improving industrial techniques, procuring new materials, and originating new models each year.

b. Definition

Soviet statistics for footwear include shoes made entirely of leather, those with leather uppers, and those with textile uppers and also may include athletic shoes and "sneakers." US statistics on production of footwear include leather shoes, play shoes, athletic shoes, and slippers but exclude tennis shoes and sneakers. Rubber footwear such as boots and galoshes is excluded from such statistics in both countries.

c. Statistical Comparison

Data concerning footwear in the USSR and in the US in 1958 are shown in Table 7.*

d. Inputs of Raw Materials

Materials used in Soviet production of footwear include, in addition to high-quality leather, pigskin, goatskin, and various substitute materials. In addition, textiles and artificial leather are used for shoe uppers and rubber and composition for soles. In 1955 it was reported that 20 percent of the material produced by Soviet light industry for uppers was a combination of textile and leather.

* Table 7 follows on p. 13.

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Table 7

Footwear in the USSR and in the US
1958

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>US</u>
Total production	Million pairs	356	582
Production per capita	Pairs	1.7	3.3
Consumption per capita	Pairs	1.8	3.4
Imports	Million pairs	24.5	4.9
Exports	Million pairs	0.3	4.3

Inputs of materials in the US include greater quantities of high-quality leather, a variety of special textiles, and an abundance of high-quality synthetic materials such as Neolite for long-wearing soles and nylon for heels.

e. Significant Comparative Differences

Although the product mix of footwear in the USSR is hardly comparable to that in the US, differences in the product mixes tend to offset each other. US statistics, for example, include a sizable number of slippers, whereas Soviet production of slippers is small. US statistics, however, exclude tennis shoes and sneakers, whereas Soviet statistics are believed to include such items.

In both countries, materials for production of uppers are about 80 percent leather. The remaining 20 percent is material that is partly leather and material that is substituted for leather. In the US, leather soles are used on about one-third of the shoes, including slippers, and nonleather soles of composition or rubber make up two-thirds. Soviet practice probably is similar. In each case, however, US materials are of better quality, whether leather, textile, or synthetic.

Aside from the volume of production, the great difference between US and Soviet footwear lies in the quality of the finished product, which reflects the quality of the materials used and the details of construction. In these respects the USSR lags seriously behind the US.

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7. Paper and Paperboard

a. General

Unlike the US, the USSR never has achieved a high level in production of paper for consumer use. The Soviet paper industry is considered by US specialists to be at least from 5 to 10 years behind the US in research. In production the gap is considerably greater. Production of paperboard is especially small by comparison, Soviet production in 1958 being only 6 percent as large as US production in 1958.

b. Definition

Of all the paper produced in the USSR, about 20 percent is newsprint, 20 percent is printing and writing paper, and 30 percent is packing and wrapping paper. Included in the remaining 30 percent are numerous types of paper for industrial and technical uses and other types produced in small quantity. Because of the low level of production, however, the household consumer receives an extremely small share of the paper produced, aside from printed matter. Production of paper in the US is distributed as follows: newsprint, 13 percent; book paper, 25 percent; fine paper, 11 percent; coarse paper, 27 percent; household paper, 12 percent; and other paper products, 12 percent.

Paperboard in the US is produced in a wide range of special types, including the following important categories: liners, corrugating material, boxboard, and paperboard stock. Soviet production of paperboard consists primarily of boxboard.

c. Statistical Comparison

Data concerning paper and paperboard in the USSR and in the US in 1958 are shown in Table 8.*

d. Inputs of Raw Materials

In the USSR, as in the US, primary materials for production of paper and paperboard are largely woodpulp. Both countries have vast forest areas, largely coniferous, from which to obtain a continuing supply of woodpulp. In addition, both countries use smaller quantities of other cellulose materials, including rags, wastepaper, straw, cotton linters, and numerous other materials of less common use. The USSR is beginning to produce paper from reeds (bamboolike grasses) in areas which are without forests. Paper of high rag content, necessary for stock of higher quality and greater durability, is produced in relatively greater amounts in the US than in the USSR.

* Table 8 follows on p. 15.

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Table 8

Paper and Paperboard in the USSR and in the US
1958

<u>Item and Quantity</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>US</u>
Paper			
Total production	Thousand metric tons	2,200	12,226
Production per capita	Kilograms	11	70
Consumption per capita	Kilograms	11	96
Imports	Thousand metric tons	77	6,158 a/
Exports	Thousand metric tons	93	1,654 a/
Paperboard			
Total production	Thousand metric tons	700	12,827
Production per capita	Kilograms	3.4	74
Consumption per capita	Kilograms	3.4	68
Imports a/	Thousand metric tons	Negligible	549
Exports a/	Thousand metric tons	Negligible	1,542

a. Data are for 1957.

Production and foreign trade in woollpulp in the US and in the USSR, most of which is used in production of paper, is shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Woodpulp in the USSR and in the US
1958

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Thousand Metric Tons</u>	
	<u>USSR</u>	<u>US</u>
Total production	2,400 a/	19,606
Imports	76	1,914
Exports	219	572

a. Estimated.

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e. Significant Comparative Differences

Consumption per capita of paper in the US is almost nine times that in the USSR. The USSR, nevertheless, anticipates that production of 3.5 million metric tons in 1965 "will fully satisfy the demand" of the economy and of individual consumers, although this amount would be less than 30 percent of US production in 1958.

The USSR has very low consumption of bag and wrapping papers, tissues and other household paper, and paperboard, all of which make up at least two-thirds of US consumption.

Packaging for the retail industry is especially crude. For example, packaging of food and wrapping of numerous other consumer goods in the modern sense is virtually unknown in the USSR. On the other hand, paper for textbooks and supplies and for other books for general reading appears ample.

8. Durable Consumer Goods

a. General

For the most part, production of durable consumer goods in the USSR is small, poorly organized, and neglected. Reflecting the low priority of such production is the fact that larger household appliances such as washing machines and refrigerators are produced in subsidiary shops of machine building enterprises which specialize in production of aircraft, armaments, and the like. These appliances are hardly comparable in design, engineering features, size, or materials with the modern, annually improved models in the US. Some of the smaller electrical appliances and radio and television receivers are products of greater specialization and tend to compare more favorably with US models. Numbers of items of durable consumer goods such as food freezers and air conditioners are not produced in quantity in the USSR and are virtually unknown to the Soviet consumer.

b. Statistical Comparison

Data on durable consumer goods in the USSR and in the US in 1958 for which comparable figures are available are shown in Table 10.*

* Table 10 follows on p. 17.

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Table 10

Selected Durable Consumer Goods in the USSR and in the US
1958

<u>Item and Quantity</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Thousand Units</u>
Refrigerators			
Total production a/	360	3,050	
Imports	Negligible	Negligible	
Exports	12.7	352	
Washing machines			
Total production b/	538	3,856	
Imports	Negligible	Negligible	
Exports	Negligible	91	
Radios			
Total production c/	3,900	12,507	
Imports	Negligible	641	
Exports	22.1	212	
Television receivers			
Total production d/	1,000	4,920	
Imports	Negligible	Negligible	
Exports	88	140	

a. Production in the USSR amounted to 1 refrigerator per 578 persons; in the US, to 1 per 57 persons.

b. Production in the USSR amounted to 1 washing machine per 387 persons; in the US, to 1 per 45 persons.

c. Production in the USSR amounted to 1 radio per 53 persons; in the US, to 1 per 14 persons.

d. Production in the USSR amounted to 1 television receiver per 208 persons; in the US, to 1 per 35 persons.

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APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGY

Data on Soviet consumer goods included in this research aid are for the year 1958 unless otherwise indicated.

Figures for total production of various consumer goods in the USSR were officially announced in the report on the fulfillment of the plan for 1958. Figures on such production in the US were published by the Department of Commerce, except those for radio and television receivers, which were taken from a trade publication. The widths of Soviet fabrics were derived by equating data published in the report on the fulfillment of the plan for the first quarter of 1959 (reported for the first time in square meters) with those for the first quarter of 1958 (reported in linear meters). Weights of Soviet fabrics are weighted averages derived from information in various Soviet sources. Measurements of width and weight of fabrics produced in the US are from publications of the Department of Commerce.

Information on imports and exports is from officially reported statistics of both countries.

Data on consumption for both countries are derived from production totals by adjusting for foreign trade balances. Population data used were midyear figures for 1958, as follows: USSR, 208 million; US, 174 million.

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APPENDIX B

SOURCE REFERENCES

The sources used in preparing this research aid are listed below according to the type of information that was obtained from each source.

Evaluations, following the classification entry and designated "Eval.," have the following significance:

<u>Source of Information</u>	<u>Information</u>
Doc. - Documentary	1 - Confirmed by other sources
A - Completely reliable	2 - Probably true
B - Usually reliable	3 - Possibly true
C - Fairly reliable	4 - Doubtful
D - Not usually reliable	5 - Probably false
E - Not reliable	6 - Cannot be judged
F - Cannot be judged	

"Documentary" refers to original documents of foreign governments and organizations; copies or translations of such documents by a staff officer; or information extracted from such documents by a staff officer, all of which may carry the field evaluation "Documentary."

Evaluations not otherwise designated are those appearing on the cited document; those designated "RR" are by the author of this research aid. No "RR" evaluation is given when the author agrees with the evaluation on the cited document.

Production

Pravda, 16 Jan 59, p. 1, 2. U. Eval. Doc.
Commerce. Survey of Current Business, Feb 59, p. S3⁴ - S 40.
U. Eval. RR 2.

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Population

Pravda, 10 May 59. U. Eval. RR 1.
Commerce, Bureau of the Census. "Population Estimates," Current Population Reports, 11 Jun 59. U. Eval. RR 2.

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